REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Non-elected claims 1-10, 18-20 and 28-31 are canceled without prejudice. Claims 11, 21 and 32 are canceled and replaced with new claims 36, 37 and 38. Claims 12-17, 22-27, 33 and 34 are amended to depend from the new claims 36-38. By this amendment, claims 12-17, 22-27, and 33-38 are pending in the application. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application, as amended, are respectfully requested.

Claims 11-13, 15, 16, 21-23, 25, 26 and 32-35 were rejected as being anticipated by Freedman (U.S. Patent No. 4,839,829). Claims 14 and 24 were rejected as being obvious over Freedman in view of White (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0063887 A1). Claims 17 and 27 were rejected as being obvious over Freedman in view of Robinson (U.S. Patent No. 5,850,584). These rejections are respectfully traversed in light of the amendments made to the claims.

The present invention relates to a data processing apparatus that can select one from a plurality of image processing apparatus according to various conditions for processing an image. One feature of the embodiments of the present invention is the conversion of print data which is non-specific to characteristics of the plurality of image processing apparatuses into image data which is specific to one of the plurality of image processing apparatus by the data processing apparatus. As explained in the specification (see, e.g., pages 17 and 22-23), cost estimate can be more accurately made based on characteristics of each of the plurality of image processing apparatuses. Such characteristics, however, are often not manifested when the image to be processed is presented in a format such as PDF (print data) that is not specific to the image processing apparatus. Thus, cost can be more accurately estimated after the print data is converted to raster image data (image data) that is specific for each image processing apparatus. For example, toner consumption by an image processing apparatus cannot be accurately estimated

from PDF data (see page 17, fifth full paragraph) but can be accurately estimated from the raster image data generated for the particular image processing apparatus. As another example, color characteristics of each image processing apparatus may be different. For example, to print a red pixel, one image processing apparatus may use magenta 100% and yellow 90% while another image processing apparatus may use magenta 95% and yellow 95%, resulting in different ink consumption. These effects should be taken into consideration for an accurate cost estimate. This is accomplished by generating image data (raster image data) for each image processing apparatus (see p. 23, second and third full paragraph).

New independent claims 36, 37 and 38, which replaces claims 11, 21 and 32, are drafted to more clearly point out the various features of the invention. Claim 36 recites, *inter alia*, "a calculation section for receiving print data through the network, the print data being in a format non-specific to characteristics of the plurality of image processing apparatuses, for generating a plurality of image data from the print data based on characteristics of the plurality of image processing apparatuses, each image data being specific to one of the plurality of image processing apparatus, and for generating, based on the plurality of image data, cost estimate data representing cost required for producing an image from the print data by each image processing apparatuses". Method claim 37 and computer program claim 38 include similar claim language.

The cited references do not teach such features. The Freedman reference generally teaches estimating cost of printing a submitted job by a plurality of printing apparatuses, but the estimate appears to be based only on printing parameters of the input data (see col. 12; Figs. 2A, 2B, 3B and 3B). Freedman does not specifically teach generating a plurality of image data from the received print data based on characteristics of the image processing apparatuses and generating cost estimate data based on such image data. The secondary references White and

Robinson similarly fail to teach such features. Accordingly, the applicant respectfully submits that new claims 36, 37 and 38 are patentable over the cited references. Claims 12-17, 22-27 and 33-35 depend from claims 36, 37 and 38 and are therefore also patentable.

The art made of record but not relied upon by the Examiner has been considered. However, it is submitted that this art neither describes nor suggests the presently claimed invention.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application, as amended, are requested.

If there are any fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-1314.

Respectfully submitted,
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